

Urgent -- Alerting System

Posted by: "Jerry Wellman"

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Utah CAP: Urgent -- Alerting System

All,

CAP has three missions: Aerospace Education, Cadet Programs and Emergency Services. (I will refer to this in a moment.)

This morning I received a call from a high-ranking State of Utah agency official. He informed me there was a missing person search in progress and asked if CAP had resources and could, if asked, respond. My answer to him was if CAP was requested, "Yes, I can make some calls and get people going.

And then I got thinking, I said "I can make some CALLS." Wrong answer.

Weeks ago Kent Hopkins asked for information for implementing the wing alerting system. The response from ALL was dismal. Utah Wing CAP should not have to tell an agency that "we will make calls." We should have an alerting system because we are an EMERGENCY RESPONSE group! We have a system in place and it is ready to be used. It cannot be used because we lack REQUESTED information from our members!

In short, we are an emergency response organization and there are expectations of us. So here's where we are going and a formal policy will be forthcoming.

If you (cadets AND seniors) have a CAPF101 card (i.e. you are listed in eServices as qualified to participate in emergency services missions), you WILL be listed in the wing alert system. NO EXCEPTIONS! Each squadron with members holding CAPF101 cards WILL have an alerting officer (could be someone with multiple duty) AND a way to alert squadron members. NO EXCEPTIONS! Each squadron with an assigned aircraft WILL have an alert crew that could quickly respond when called. (I have no guidance on "quickly" but if you are catching the flavor of this message, the response would have some "sense of urgency." After all, when we're called, it's a life and property issue.)

Yes, I know we all have families, school, jobs, community, church, etc. Yes, I know there will be times you cannot respond when alerted. Yet, because you have a CAPF101 card, you should be thinking along the lines of: "I may need to respond when called." You may need to take a day of vacation. You may need to take a day without pay. You may need to arrange a ride to the mission base. Again, if you CHOOSE to have a CAPF101 card, you have made the choice to be part of a response agency, i.e., the Utah Wing Civil Air Patrol.

Let's talk about choice. You chose to join CAP. You can choose to participate in any of our three missions (Aerospace Education, Cadet Programs, and Emergency Services). If these programs (and the associated expectations) do not suit you, please find another group to join or become a CAP patron member or simply be an inactive CAP member. If you choose to be involved in the ES program, you are expected to be trained and available. ES alerts seldom come at convenient times. YOU NEED TO be aware of the expectations and be available as BEST YOU CAN. Again, it is YOUR choice!

If you have problems with any of this and want to weigh in on a soon-to-be-published formal wing policy, SPEAK UP NOW!

On July 23rd we will begin testing our wing alert system. Details have been sent to every squadron commander -- so coordinate with your squadron commander to get the needed information to Kent Hopkins ASAP. It's basically a text messaging system. Squadrons may develop ANY SYSTEM they want to supplement the wing system. Your squadron system must be published and submitted to the wing ES officer, Steve Carver. The alerting system will then be tested monthly. Following the system test, we will match records of who is in the wing alert system and who has a CAPF101. Those with a CAPF101 and not in the wing alert system will have their ES qualifications revoked. Plain and simple.

Again, if you have a CAPF101 Card issued as a member of Utah Wing, you are expected to participate AS BEST YOU CAN in ES missions (training and actual). When we issue an alert (actual or test), you are expected to respond! If you CHOOSE to not participate, please let your squadron commander know (or notify Steve Carver) and your ES qualifications will be removed from eServices.

A formal memorandum of understanding has been submitted to the State of Utah for approval. This document will be used in discussions with other agencies to "market" our capabilities and resources. Utah CAP will not be in the position of telling any agency that we have an inflated number of people and resources that, in essence, are unwilling to respond. I would rather have 50 qualified CAP members willing to respond than a roster of hundreds that really don't want to be inconvenienced.

The time for input and discussion will end in the next week. Speak up now if you have concerns.

Jerry Wellman, Col., CAP
Commander, Utah Wing
